

Washington, DC – Following the confirmation of Gary Locke as the President's new Commerce Secretary, Rep. Wm. Lacy Clay (MO-01), chair of the Information Policy, Census and National Archives Subcommittee, and Rep. Mike Honda (CA-15), chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus and member of the Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Subcommittee, which has jurisdiction over census funding, released the following statement:

"With Secretary Locke confirmed, we look forward to working with the Secretary and President Obama to ensure that the Census Bureau has the resources and support necessary to conduct robust media and other outreach to all hard-to-count communities, including African American, Asian American and Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and tribal communities.

"Racial and ethnic minorities, including those in highly dense urban populations, have historically presented unique challenges to the Census Bureau. Many are distrustful of government, and reluctant to participate in government surveys. We support the Census Bureau's media and other outreach to linguistically and culturally isolated communities, such as households in the African, Asian, Latino, and other diasporas. More than a third of the Asian American population is limited English proficient; of those speaking Spanish at home, less than half are limited English proficient.

"One important way to raise awareness in linguistic minority communities is to ensure robust resources for in-language paid media. For example, we saw a 300% increase in the number of Asian media outlets from 1990 to 2007; there have been significant increases in other communities as well.

"We are committed to assisting the Administration's efforts to count all of our constituents, and ensure an accurate census of all traditionally undercounted populations, including the African American, Asian and Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and tribal populations."

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*The Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) is comprised of Members of Congress who are committed to promoting the well-being of the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. CAPAC is bipartisan and bicameral and currently has 30 members. It was founded in 1994 by then Congressman Norman Mineta, and is currently chaired by Congressman Michael Honda.*